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# City of San Diego to Consider Equity in Prioritizing Neighborhood Development Projects

## CITY COUNCIL ADOPTS POLICY UPDATES THAT WILL HELP DETERMINE PROJECT FUNDING AND EXPAND OUTREACH PROCESS

SAN DIEGO – To fund neighborhood infrastructure projects more equitably and efficiently, today the San Diego City Council adopted updates to policies that guide how those projects are prioritized. The Council also adopted policies that will encourage more public input on development in San Diego.

[Council Policy 800-14](#) sets the guidelines for how [Capital Improvements Program](#) (CIP) projects are prioritized and funded. The adopted updates include amendments to the factors that must be considered when adding projects to the City's Capital Improvements Program.

**“Equity in action is about producing results,” said Kim Desmond, the City’s Chief Race and Equity Officer. “It’s about using this policy to set a standard toward how we address disparities in neighborhoods where our parks, stormwater systems, streets, sidewalks and libraries have historically lacked equitable infrastructure investments. Equity in action is what we will accomplish with this policy.”**

The scoring criteria for how a project is prioritized include public safety, a project’s impact on the level of service for residents, and legal compliance. To align with the recently adopted [Build Better SD initiative](#), language was added to favor investments that serve a greater population or areas experiencing significant growth. In line with the City’s Climate Action Plan, factors related to protecting the environment and improving a community’s health are now more heavily weighed.

Under the new “Equal and Equitable Community Investment” factor, projects that address identified disparities or benefit structurally excluded communities will now be prioritized. These are defined as neighborhoods, census tracts or Council Districts that have low levels of access to City services and programs, that are impacted by a history of institutional racism or face barriers to participating fully in the economic, social or political life of the City.

**“All residents deserve to see the benefits of critical infrastructure,” said City Planning Director Heidi Vonblum. “Council Policy 800-14 helps implement recently adopted initiatives like the Parks Master Plan, Climate Action Plan and Built Better SD that all set forth guiding principles to prioritize infrastructure investments in the areas with the greatest needs and communities that serve the most people.”**

The Council also adopted updates to [Council Policy 000-32](#), which guides how public input is gathered to prioritize infrastructure projects. City staff will now conduct an expanded citywide public outreach effort at least once every two years which will help determine the CIP budget. This includes gathering input from community-based organizations, community planning groups and other interested stakeholders and individuals. Focused engagement will occur within the City’s structurally excluded communities.

**“These updates to the Council policies will significantly improve our efforts to prioritize infrastructure investments in line with the City’s strategic goals and make San Diego a better place to live for all residents,” said Rania Amen, the City’s Engineering & Capital Projects Director and City Engineer. “We look forward to working with all communities across the city to bring critical infrastructure projects to the areas that need it most.”**

In 2021, the City Council adopted the [Parks for All of Us](#) initiative, and earlier this year the City Council adopted [Build Better SD](#), which both called for an update to City policies. The Engineering & Capital Projects Department and the Office of Race and Equity, along with City councilmembers, hosted public meetings earlier this year to gather additional feedback from residents and stakeholders to update these policies.

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